

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM.]

BY ORSON S. MURRAY.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

BRANDON, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1839.

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VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

BRANDON, SATURDAY, DEC. 7, 1839.

In the case of John Pierpont, recently exhibited in the Telegraph, the *hearers* were seen to be undertaking to shackle the minister. In the case of H. C. Wright, below, his brethren in the ministry are undertaking to do the same thing. The spirit and principles—if there be anything manifest that ought to be called principles—which actuated the self-constituted censors and proscribers of John Pierpont and Henry C. Wright, are the spirit and principles which actuate those who cry out "stop my paper," if occasionally an article be published offensive to the reader.

From the Liberator.
TO THE ESSEX NORTH ASSOCIATION
OF CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS.

Boston, Nov. 6, 1839.

Dear Brethren:—Jan. 15, 1839, I received the following notice from your Secretary pro tem.:

"Voted, That Rev. H. C. Wright be requested to appear at the next meeting of the Association, to explain certain reports which have reached this body unfavorable to his ministerial character for order and regularity."

February 27, 1839, I appeared before the Association at Georgetown. Requested to know whether I was to be put on trial for my abolition and non-resistance principles and practices. If so, I demanded an opportunity to defend myself publicly. The Association said, "I was not called before them on trial, but solely for a friendly conference."

I then submitted to the Association the following written declaration: "That I shall plead the cause of Non-Resistance and Abolition, shall preach the kingdom of heaven as eternally opposed to the kingdom of brute force, in every town and village where I can get a place—a meeting-house, a vestry, a school-house, a private dwelling, a hall, or barn—THO' ALL THE MINISTERS OF EVERY DENOMINATION SHALL OPPOSE—and if I cannot get a house of man's building to lecture in, I will go into the great house of God's own building, with the rock for my pulpit and the heavens for my sounding board. I repeat—I shall preach Peace, Non-Resistance and Abolition—the non-fighting, bloodless kingdom of Christ, in every town and village that I can visit, THOUGH ALL THE MINISTERS SHALL OPPOSE."

The following charges or reports were then laid before the Association by brothers Isaac Brame and Seth Keeler. I requested the Association to put them in writing, that I might see them; but, as they did not, I took them down as they were made by those brethren, nearly verbatim as I could.

1. Brother Wright attended a meeting for prayer in the vestry of the Orthodox church at Amesbury Mills, and prayed and talked on entire consecration to God and suffering the loss of all things for Christ, contrary to the expressed wishes of the minister, Seth Keeler."

2. "He lectured in the same vestry on Non-Resistance, after brother Keeler had told him that he could not consent to let him propagate his principles of Non-Resistance among his people."

3. "He said he was a member of the Association, and the people urged this as a reason against brother Keeler for opposing his lecturing in the vestry."

4. "That brother Wright, when he came to Georgetown to lecture on Non-Resistance, called on two families (Joseph H. Noyes and Daniel Palmer) to talk about lecturing, before he called on the minister, Isaac Brame."

5. "That brother Wright consented to lecture in the meeting-house, if the people wished it, after the minister had declared his entire dissent; and that he was knowing and consenting to the fact of having a notice presented to the minister to read, to have a meeting appointed, when he knew that he was opposed to it."

6. "That brother Wright held a meeting in the house of one of the church members, (Den. Daniel Palmer's) contrary to the wishes of the minister, and after he had refused his consent to his lecturing in the pulpit."

7. "That brother Wright spoke against Washington in one of his lectures in Georgetown—declaring, that as a warrior and slaveholder, he had no respect for him—that these were worse sins in Washington than in others. Brother Brame affirming, that if a man considered it right to condemn Washington for fighting, this was a sufficient reason why he should not preach in his pulpit."

8. "That the course of brother Wright in Georgetown came near to driving brother Brame away from his people." Such are the reports made, as I took them down at the time. I tried to get the exact meaning and words. But I may be mistaken. If so, I am ready to be corrected.

Then the following preamble and vote were presented by brother Leonard Withington.

"Whereas, this Association was formed, among other objects, for the promotion of brotherly courtesy and love, and each member subscribes an obligation 'to consider their connexion a special reason for being friends and guardians to the reputation, comfort and usefulness of each other and all christian ministers,' and whereas, the course pursued by H. C. Wright, in the judgment of this Association, is a violation of said rule, and his extreme opinions on Non-Resistance are such as the members of this Association do not wish to be involved in; therefore

without judging his piety as a christian, or his character as a man,
Voted, That his connexion with this Association be dissolved."

The following was then presented by brother Henry Durant as a substitute:

"Whereas, the members of this Association are pledged to the following rule—i. e. 'that they will consider their connexion with it a special reason for being friends and guardians to the reputation, comfort and usefulness of each other and all christian ministers, according to the rules of our holy religion; and

Whereas, brother H. C. Wright has submitted to the Association the following avowal, i. e. 'I shall plead the cause of Non-Resistance, Abolition and Moral Reform generally, in every town and village where I can get a place, a meeting-house, a vestry, a school-house, a private dwelling or hall, though all the ministers of every denomination oppose; and

Whereas, the course of action here avowed is deemed inconsistent with the aforesaid rule of the Association, and constitutes the discourtesy and ministerial indecorum alluded to in the vote requesting him to appear before them to explain his course; therefore,

Voted, That while we express no opinion as to his piety as a christian, as to his character as a man, or to the principles he adopts, brother H. C. Wright's connexion with this body be henceforth dissolved."

Brother Durant offered this substitute, because he said the Association ought to assume the responsibility of setting forth the specific reasons why they dissolved the connexion. He said, "It was due to themselves, to me, and to justice, to specify the reasons." For this frankness and candor, I thank him. If the Association think it wrong and contrary to their rules, for one of their number to lecture in a pulpit or parish contrary to the wish of the minister, they ought to say so; and it would not be christian, honest, or courteous to reject one of their number without telling him why.

After discussing the matter half a day, the whole subject was laid over to the next meeting. The Association then requested me to withdraw myself, as I did not see my way clear to comply with their rules. I told the Association I would cheerfully withdraw, provided they would enter on their minutes the following vote:

Voted, That it is a violation of a rule of this Association for one of its members to lecture on Abolition, Temperance, Non-Resistance, or any other subject, in any pulpit, contrary to the wishes of the officiating minister."

This the Association refused to do; and the whole was adjourned to another time.

June 27, 1839, I received certain votes passed by the Association, accompanied by one saying that they were not 'for the public eye, but for brother Wright.' I shall not, therefore, publish them at present.

Oct. 30, 1839, I received the following: "Brother H. C. Wright—This Association, being kept in doubt by your silence whether you have withdrawn from us, request you to inform our Secretary previously to our next meeting."

Dear Brethren:—I feel that it is due to you and to truth to tell you frankly my present views of a Christian Church and Ministry. As to my theological principles, I am not aware that they are different from what they were ten years ago.—They are those of the TRINITARIAN CONGREGATIONALISTS generally.

A CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND MINISTRY.—No association or combination of persons can be called a christian church, unless, as a body, it is guided in its customs and practices by the spirit of Christ. All those organizations, called churches, are to be brought to this standard; and if they have not the spirit of Christ, they are none of his. So I say of families, states and nations. You might as well call a tribe of Indians a christian church, as any of our churches such, unless they have this spirit, as churches.

No combination of men can advocate SLAVERY and WAR guided by the spirit of Christ. The following facts exist in our midst. One sixth of our population are denied, by law, the marriage relation, and are compelled to live in a state of concubinage. One sixth of the children born in the nation know no fathers, are illegitimate, and looked upon as soon as born and trained as merchandise. One sixth of our population are daily driven, like oxen, to unrequited toil. The gospel is denied by law to one sixth of our population. For them Jesus died, but every effort is made by this nation to overcloud their immortal souls with artificial night, to shut them out of the kingdom of heaven and consign them to unending woe.—Seventy thousand of God's children, created in his own image and crowned by Him with glory and honor, are stolen every year in our midst, and raised for the human flesh markets. God's image is bought and sold among us as an important branch of our commerce. The marriage institution is abrogated. Parents and children, and brothers and sisters, are torn asunder for gain. Women are bought and sold in our markets for purposes of lust and gain. Our whole population is trained to deeds of murder. The war power is incorporated into our civil and religious institutions, and men are trained to shoot and stab each other. The murders and horrors of the Revolution, the butchery of the Cherokees and Seminoles, and a system of armed and

bloody resistance to evil, of vengeance, are justified by the nation and the church, directly or indirectly.

Those churches and associations of ministers that apologize for slavery and war—for man-killing and man-stealing—that refuse, as *bodies*, to speak against them—that oppose the discussion of them, or keep silence respecting them—do countenance all the above facts and help perpetrate them. Churches that admit slaveholders and warriors into their pulpits are accessory to all the abominations necessarily involved in slavery and war. They join hands with robbery and murder.—They cannot have the mind of Christ and do these things.

Can I call such churches, christian churches? Can I call such ministers, christian ministers? I cannot. Any thing but that. That professed minister, who apologizes for robbery and murder, for adultery and concubinage, for cruelty, injustice and legalized assassination. He that thrusts Abolition and Non-Resistance out of the pulpit, and invites slavery, war and armed resistance in, is, in fact, it not in intention, accessory to the pollutions, blood and crime necessarily attendant on slavery and war. Before God and the world, I must forever disown, as a christian church and ministry those combinations of men that plead for slavery and war, and thereby sanction adultery, theft, robbery and murder. A christian ministry sanction robbery and murder! Never. It is an insult to our Divine Lord to make Him the patron of slavery and military systems. To invest Him with a slave-driver's whip, or a murderous warrior's sword, is a denial of his mission to the world. It is blasphemy against the Holy One.

A christian church and a christian ministry will be armed with the mind of Christ—put on the Lord Jesus as a shield imbued with the spirit of Christ—will be crucified to the world—be ready to suffer and die—but they never will be the means of inflicting suffering and death on others in defence or as penalty to benefit themselves or others. They will openly and fearlessly, in their associated capacity, bear their testimony against sins in high places and in low places, whether it be legalized by the state or sanctioned and protected by ecclesiastical bodies. They will follow the will of God as the only law of life, and never bow to the will of the people or to public opinion. They will never go the Bills of Rights, Charters, Constitutions and codes of human laws, or to lawyers, judges or magistrates to learn how to treat their enemies—but will sit at the feet of Jesus and ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have us to do?" Their allegiance will be paid only to the divine government. They will be of no reputation among men. They will be crucified with Christ. They will be filled with the fulness of Christ.

Guided by such a spirit, no church or ministry can, directly or indirectly, sustain the injustice and pollutions of slavery, the atrocities of war, or the vindictive spirit and revengeful ferocities necessarily attendant on a penal power of life and death over man in the hands of men.—Such a church and ministry never could claim a right of dominion over man, and thus impiously war upon the prerogatives of God. They could not fight with carnal weapons. They could not, with heaving-daring ambition, claim a penal power of life and death over man. Nor could they return evil for evil, nor avenge their own wrongs; but they would leave the work of punishing sinners and protecting their own rights to God.

No church or ministry, guided by the spirit of Christ, could, for fear of division or loss of reputation or stipend, oppose the discussion of Abolition or Non-Resistance. Every combination of men, misnamed christian church and ministry, which cannot, without division and distraction, discuss these great and holy causes, so identified with the kingdom of heaven and so potent in their bearings on the present and eternal destinies of mankind, ought to be at once and forever renounced as unworthy the holy name they hypocritically assume. They are the synagogues of Satan, rather than christian churches and a christian ministry.

A christian church and christian ministry advocating the doctrine that man is invested with a discretionary penal power of life and death over man! The doctrine that the precepts of the gospel have nought to do with men acting as human governments! The doctrine, that what is sin in individuals, is right in nations! The doctrine that some are born slaves and some slaveholders! The doctrine that men may acquire a right to hold the body of man as property! A right to abrogate the marriage institution, and to withhold the gospel of mercy from his brother! While combinations of men, holding such impious doctrines, are recognized as christian churches, or a christian ministry, there can be no hope that this world will be regenerated, disenthralled and saved.

Do you, dear brethren, as an association, by your silence, or by your direct apologies, lend the influence of your body to sustain the right of man to hold and use man, the image of God, as property? As an association, does your influence go to sustain the right to buy and sell the bodies and souls of men in the market? The right to separate husbands and wives, parents and children, and drive men, like cattle, to unrequited toil? Do you, as an association, connive at the abolition of the

marriage institution, and the system of concubinage that is sanctioned and sustained by the American Church and Republic? Do you, by apologies for men-stealers, men-killers, slaveholders, and warriors, by admitting them to the pulpit and to the communion, by silence, or by refusal to admit the discussion of abolition and non-resistance into your churches and association, for fear of excitement, reproach, or loss of stipend—countenance and sustain the pollutions, the robbery, the murder, the horrors, the outrages on God and man, necessarily involved in slavery and war! If so, it would be a libel on Christianity, to call you an association of christian ministers. If you have a commission to apologize for concubinage, for theft, robbery and murder, (and such a commission you have, if you are commissioned to apologize for slavery or war,) you never received it from Christ. The Prince of Peace commission you to fight, or apologize for fighting with carnal weapons! The God of the oppressed commission you to plead for slavery, or to countenance it! NEVER—Hamaniy, the slave and the God of the slave, abhorrently reject your pretensions to the character of a christian association, while as a body, you apologize for the pollutions and horrors of slavery and war.

My brethren, as you must soon give account of your stewardship, in the name of the God of humanity, I entreat you to open your eyes and look. Three millions of your dear brethren, the purchase of that dying love of the Son of God which you profess to preach, lie at the door of your Association, with hearts crushed and bodies mangled by thieves and robbers, calling upon you, as professed ministers of divine mercy, for help. Poor brethren—they are despised, scorned and trodden under foot. Will you, as an Association, steel your hearts against them? Can you, like priests and Levites, pass by them? Their hearts are broken. Their souls are bowed down. They are forbidden to read the Gospel. The tie that binds them to humanity is cut asunder. They are regarded and treated as brutes—as mere things. As an Association, have you taken any notice of these bleeding victims of American Christianity and republicanism! Have you done any thing to get churches, as churches, to heal these crushed and broken hearts, and to relieve these imbruted and gory victims of republican tyranny and lust.—Is the day of redemption to the slave any nearer, by any thing that you have done, as an association? Or by any thing that the churches under your care, have done as churches, through your instrumentality? As you must meet those soul-stricken victims of the American church and ministry, of which you are a part, at the bar of the God of the oppressed, let your conscience answer these questions. Have you done what you could? Have you done any thing, as an Association?

I love you, brethren, with a brother's heart, but I love my Savior more. I have much reason to love you as men, as very dear friends, with whom I have often taken sweet counsel, but I have more reason to love Him who hath loved me and died for me—in whose steps I would follow in forbearance, forgiveness, and submission to injuries in all cases. I feel for you, when I think that you are lending your influence to sustain the blood-cemented throne of violence, and thus sanctioning the abhorred system of American slavery, and the accursed system of human slaughter, but I feel more for my dear brethren in bonds. The silent, uncomplaining sorrows and tears of the slave have pierced my heart. My very soul is knit to the poor, despised, black slave. I leave to him the closer because he is despised and trodden under foot by the rich and proud, the scribes and pharisees, the priests and Levites of this hypocritical church and nation. My heart is ready to burst when I think that I am to be cast out of the Association, because I cannot recognize those as ministers of Christ and followers of Christ, who countenance slavery and war, adultery, theft, injustice and every crime, and because I denounce all such as traitors to the pure and peaceful kingdom of the Son of God. It is for you I feel, not for myself.

I should be false to human rights, false to my beloved brother in bonds, false to humanity, false to the slaveholding tyrant, false to the church, false to the ministry, false to yourselves, false to Him, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, false to God, were I to acknowledge you, or any other body of men, as an association of christian ministers, while as a body, you, by your silence or otherwise, countenance and support the concubinage, the cruelty, the robbery and blood, essentially and necessarily connected with slavery and war.

I say not, that you, as individuals, intend to countenance these outrages on God and man. I do not believe you do intend it. But the effect of your silence and indifference as a body, and of your unwillingness to discuss and act upon slavery and homicide in your association, in reality casts the weight of your influence, as a body, on the side of slavery and war. Would our blessed Lord, who loved and died for his enemies, apologize for the blood and murder of the revolution? Can you conceive that the spirit of Christ could have directed the fiend-like carnage of Bunker Hill, Saratoga and Yorktown? To shoot, stab and

hang them—is this the Christian way to show your love to your enemies? Is it possible to conceive of the meek, gentle, loving, suffering, dying, forgiving Savior, brandishing the warrior's sword or the slaveholder's lash? It is then an insult to divine justice and mercy, to suppose the advocates of slavery and war, robbery and murder, to be sent of God to preach the Gospel. May the Lord bring the association and the churches under its care, to repentance for their connivance at these sins of slavery and war, abhorred of God, and subversive of all that is pure, just and holy among men.

I cannot, for a moment, admit the position which you seem to have taken in your dealings with me, i. e.—that it is inconsistent with 'my ministerial character for order and regularity,' to lecture on abolition, non-resistance or moral reforms generally, in a pulpit or parish, contrary to the 'wishes of the minister.'—I recognize no such authority in the clergy, to say whether abolition or non-resistance shall be introduced among the people. This, on the part of the clergy, would be lording it over God's heritage with a vengeance. I believe Christ has a ministry on earth, but he never empowered them to say what subjects shall be brought before the people and what not; and those who set up such a claim, ought not to be received as christian ministers. 'They are like wolves in sheep's clothing.' I shall pay no regard to such a claim.

Nor can I admit the position that the clergy, when they cast their influence on the side of man-stealing and man-killing, and strike hands with robbers and murderers, are not to be rebuked before all the people. Above all other sinners, they should be rebuked with great severity. I shall not cease to hold them up to the gaze of the world, as deceivers, false prophets, hirelings—who read and devour the flock.

Having thus stated my views, freely, frankly, and kindly, I would say, I SHALL NOT WITHDRAW MYSELF FROM THE ASSOCIATION. I have no charges to bring against you, brethren, for any thing you have done to me personally. Your personal treatment of me has been kind and brotherly—if ever it was otherwise, it has been forgiven and forgotten. If ever I have personally injured you, I hope you will forgive and forget it. Not for any personal ill-treatment is my soul pained and my complaint made—on this score my soul is at peace with you and shall be, whatever you may do to me—but I am grieved, my very heart is sick and pierced with anguish, at your indifference and opposition as a body, to abolition and non-resistance.

Should you see fit to disown me because I enter into parishes and pulpits, to plead the cause of abolition and non-resistance, in opposition to the wishes of ministers; because I cannot receive those as christian ministers who, in apologizing for slavery and war, apologize for the abolition of the marriage institution, for concubinage, for theft, robbery and murder; and because I denounce all those who apologize for, or practice these crimes, as treacherous to God and humanity, and their pretensions as hypocritical, you must do it—the responsibility must be all your own—and we will leave the whole matter between us, to be settled by the God of the slave and the Prince of Peace, in that day when we shall meet each other, and the down-trodden slave and the scathed and mangled victims of war, at that tribunal where decisions will be impartial, just and irreversible.

In the mean time, as we journey together a little longer in this vale of ignorance, error, and prejudice, let us 'put away all wrath and anger and bitterness, and be kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love; tender hearted, gentle, easy to be entreated, forgiving one another, as we hope that God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us. Let us be followers of God, as dear children, walking in love—a love that thinketh no evil, and doeth no evil.'

Should you disown me from the association, I shall attribute it to your error in judgment, want of sympathy for the slave, and your erroneous views of the rights and prerogatives of the clergy, rather than to any unkind feelings towards me. If there be any thing offensive in this, do not attribute it to any unkind feelings towards you. I know my heart rejects the imputation.

Yours, for the laws and empire of Jehovah,
H. C. WRIGHT.

Religious Miscellany.

THE IDEA OF STEWARDSHIP.

On the introduction of the new and more spiritual economy, the Jewish ritual, with all its expensive train of sacrifices and offerings vanished away. New motives and principles were now brought into exercise. The law of requirements was succeeded by the law of liberty, and the general idea of trust or stewardship, took the place of a limited but definite obligation. Realizing the extent of the deliverance which Christ had effected for them—conscious of having been redeemed from a captivity more grievous than any earthly bondage—rejoicing in their newly found life and liberty, the first Christians hastened to recognize, in all its extent, the claim which the gospel put in upon them and theirs; and, in the fulness of their hearts, at the feet of the apostles

they laid, not a portion of their property merely, but their ALL. As many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Such were Christians in the age of the church's infancy and innocence—they realized the great principles of their faith—they loved one another—they were 'of one heart, and of one mind'—they were 'ready to distribute'—willing to communicate—they renounced all right of property in this world's good, and disengaged themselves forever from its concerns; they went forth to preach 'the everlasting gospel,' without 'purse,' or 'scrip,' or any 'provision for the way.'—It is worthy of notice that this entire consecration of property is nowhere spoken of with disapprobation. It was a certain number of men acting upon a liberal interpretation of the Savior's instructions to the rich young man, who came inquiring what he should do to inherit the kingdom of heaven; and as such it was accepted and approved. 'Sell all thou hast, and give to the poor,' was the trying reply—and these men did it. They considered themselves stewards, and this was their idea of trust or stewardship. It would seem then, that contingencies may arise, in which it may become the duty of a follower of Christ to give up all—to resign his rank in society—to dispose at once of all his property, both principal and income, and to cast himself upon the wide world, a missionary of the cross, depending for subsistence upon the daily labor of his hands. The idea of stewardship cannot be fully recognized without allowing the possibility of its including all this; a conclusion borne out by the fact that such a contingency has already occurred in the history of the church, and that no sooner was such a claim made by competent authority, than it was cheerfully met, and the sacrifice signally honored by marks of the divine approbation. The great characteristic, indeed, of the first and best age of Christianity, was the extended practical recognition of the idea of trust and stewardship for Christ. Time, talents, rank, property, were one and all consecrated by multitudes to the Redeemer. It was not a question with them of much or little—love would bear no fetters—they were 'bought with a price, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ,' and they counted their worldly treasures as nought, 'so that they might win Christ and be found in Him.'

As the Gospel gradually extended its range, the same generous disinterestedness appears to have distinguished most of the early converts. After making every allowance for the peculiarities of their situation, it is impossible to escape the conclusion, that the heaviest sacrifices must have been made, in order to sustain the preaching of the gospel in all lands, and under every outward discouragement.—There must have been an extent of consecration on the part of individuals, or particular churches, compared with which, any amount of modern donation would appear utterly contemptible.

It was in view of all the dangers connected with the acquisition of wealth, that Christ cast upon his 'little flock' the cost of conveying the glad tidings of his gospel to 'every creature under heaven.' For men to ask under such circumstances, what they must give—to wish for a definite impost which should relieve them from responsibility, is to go back to 'beggarly elements.' The obligation is a test of love, and obedience an evidence of conversion. In the absence of a disposition to accept this responsibility, all other evidence may well be distrusted; it is that alone of which the world can judge, and it is one they never fail to notice. It is in this way (among others) that our 'light' must so 'shine before men,' that they, 'seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven.' A few striking instances of Christian liberality, on the ancient scale, would awaken inquiries throughout Christendom, never to be repressed; and afford a testimony to the reality of our faith, better adapted to enforce its claims on universal acceptance than volumes of argument; and we need to make such sacrifices, as much for our own benefit, as for the good of others. A few years will probably decide whether the great work, now fairly committed to our conduct, is to advance, or to recede; whether the enterprise of converting the world to Christ, including, as it does, the eradication of every vice, and the cultivation of every form of virtue, is to 'go onward to perfection,' or to linger through ages under the sickly efforts of a pusillanimous faith. In the course of ten more years, three hundred millions of our race will have passed into eternity, who are now ignorant of 'the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved.' The Gospel cannot (according to any known principles of the divine procedure) be conveyed to them during that time, unless the property of the rich is devoted to the work. There is nothing to hinder its immediate conveyance to a very large number of these persons, except the absence of pecuniary resources sufficient to defray the expense of the transmission.—Is it then too much to say that the man who will let this multitude of human beings go down to the 'second death,' rather than part with lands or money to save them, (whatever in other respects may be